DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 184 222 EA 012 535

AUTHOR Smith, William L.
TITLE The Department of Education: Its Relationship to Administrators, Teachers, and Students.
PUB DATE 18 Feb 80
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of School Administrators (112th, Anaheim, CA, February 15-18, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Administrator Responsibility; *Administrator Role; Beginning Teachers; *Educational Environment; Public Agencies; Self Esteem; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Role; Teachers
IDENTIFIERS *Department of Education

ABSTRACT

This speech begins with remarks about the importance of the new Department of Education. According to the author, the first secretary of education, Shirley Hufstedler, sees the new department as dedicated, striving for quality, supportive rather than directive, responsive, and confident of the ability of the people to make educational decisions. The author then addresses the question of how administrators can help teachers succeed. He believes that student achievement is strongly affected by the environment professional educators create. Components of this environment are teachers' concern for school and classroom structure; sense of purpose, role, and commitment; degree of confidence in themselves, their methods and subject, and their students; recognition of and sensitivity to instructional opportunities; own successful experience; and interest in continuous professional development. The administrator's role is to bring forth the best in teachers through his or her own commitment to education. Administrators must realize that teachers need more time for mutual observation and collaboration. Principals should both put new teachers in situations in which they are likely to experience early success and encourage beginning teachers to get advice from colleagues. One challenge is to design all training and retraining for education personnel around awareness and understanding of tomorrow's world. (Author/JM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED184222

*THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:
ITS RELATIONSHIP TO ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS

BY

DR. WILLIAM L. SMITH

UNITED STATES COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

EA 012 535

---

*REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY 18, 1980.

-IT'S AN EXTREME PLEASURE FOR ME TO COME HOME AGAIN. AS A PRACTITIONER, FIRST AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL AND, FOR THE LAST DECADE, AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL, THERE IS MUCH WE STILL SHARE IN COMMON. DEALING WITH THE RATE AND SCOPE OF CHANGE CONTINUES TO BE OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE. FOR ME, IT'S THE TRANSITION OF THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -- THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION YIELDS HAPPILY, AND WITH PRIDE, TO THE NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

WE'RE NOT OFFICIAL YET, BUT OUR EXPECTATION IS LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY. ON THAT BIG DAY -- BIG ED DAY -- WE WILL, IN THE WORDS OF OUR ENTHUSIASTIC NEW ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LIZ CARPENTER -- "BURST UPON THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE NATION WITH SOME FANFARE." IT WOULD BE AWFULLY GOOD IF ALL OF YOU, AND YOUR TEACHERS, AND YOUR STUDENTS COULD CELEBRATE THAT GREAT DAY, TOO, WITH FLOURISHES AND FANFARES THROUGHOUT THE LAND.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. IT HAS A NICE RING TO IT. A SATISFYING SOUND. IT'S A BIT SCARY TOO. SCARY BECAUSE IT LAYS OUT NEW CHALLENGES AND IMPOSES GRAVE NEW RESPONSIBILITIES UPON US ALL -- IN THE GOVERNMENT AND IN THE SCHOOLS. AND IT RAISES THE

IMMEDIATE AND SEARCHING QUESTION: WHAT KIND OF A DEPARTMENT WILL IT BE? I WON'T TRY TO ANSWER THAT MYSELF. I'LL CALL UPON SOME WORDS FROM THE FIRST SECRETARY OF EDUCATION, SHIRLEY HUFSTEDLER, WHO IS AS EXCITED ABOUT BEING THE SECRETARY AS WE ARE TO HAVE HER. THANK YOU, CALIFORNIA, FOR SENDING HER EAST.

THIS IS HOW SHIRLEY HUFSTEDLER ANSWERS THE QUESTION: WHAT KIND OF A DEPARTMENT WILL IT BE: (I QUOTE)

"IT WILL BE A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO THE BASIC PRINCIPLE THAT, FOR DEMOCRACY TO BE SUCCESSFUL, WE DEMOCRATS (THAT'S WITH A SMALL "D") MUST BE EDUCATED.

"IT WILL BE A DEPARTMENT THAT STRIVES UNCEASINGLY FOR THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE QUALITY AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS; A DEPARTMENT THAT SEEKS OUT MODELS OF SUCCESS, OF EXCELLENCE, AND HOLDS THEM ALOFT FOR ALL TO SEE.

"IT WILL BE A DEPARTMENT THAT SEEKS ITS ROLE AS A HELPING SUPPORTIVE FRIEND OF EDUCATION; AS A SIMPLIFIER AND A STREAMLINER OF REGULATIONS AND PAPER WORK; NOT AS A NATIONAL

ARBITER OF WHAT WILL AND WILL NOT BE DONE IN THE CLASSROOM; NOT AS THE HOLDER OF AN UNLIMITED FEDERAL PURSE; AND NOT AS A POWER BEYOND THE REACH OF LOCAL DECISIONS.

"IT WILL BE A DEPARTMENT RESPONSIVE TO ALL AND OWNED BY NONE; A DEPARTMENT COMMITTED TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW;

"A DEPARTMENT SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE PEOPLE, THE PARENTS AND THE TEACHERS/AND THE ADMINISTRATORS... ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT, THE MOST RESPONSIBLE EDUCATION DECISION MAKERS WE HAVE IN THIS COUNTRY.

"IT WILL BE, IN SHORT, AN ASSET TO YOU -- AND TO THE COMMUNITIES YOU SERVE -- AND NOT A BURDEN AS YOU GO ABOUT THE GREAT BUSINESS OF EDUCATING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE." (END QUOTE)

THE GREAT BUSINESS OF EDUCATING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE OF THE ENTIRE EDUCATION STRUCTURE. THIS IS WHERE TODAY'S PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS, THE FOLKS I'M GOING TO REFER TO

HEREAFTER AS TEACHERS, MUST COME TO GRIPS WITH THE FORMIDABLE TASK OF TEACHING THE CHILDREN OF THIS COMPLEX, QUICKLY CHANGING, PRESSURED SOCIETY. AND THIS IS WHERE I PROPOSE TO DO THE UNMENTIONABLE.

THAT IS, TO GO BACK TO BASICS, REGARDING THE EDUCATION OF THE TEACHER. BACK TO THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION: "WHAT DO WE NEED TO REMEMBER ABOUT LEARNING AND HOW DO WE HELP TEACHERS SUCCEED IN THE PRESENT TEACHING AND LEARNING SITUATION?" WE DO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PROCESS, BUT OFTTIMES, IN OUR QUEST TO MOVE AHEAD, WE FORGET.

THE PROBLEMS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, OBVIOUSLY, ARE OF CENTRAL IMPORTANCE TO THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. VIEWED IN THEIR BROADEST PERSPECTIVE, IN FACT, THEY CONSTITUTE THE HEART OF SCHOOLING. MY NOTIONS ON THE SUBJECT, IT SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED AT THE VERY BEGINNING, STEM FROM A CAREER IN ADMINISTRATION. A QUARTER OF A CENTURY, SPENT IN THIS BUSINESS HAS LEFT ME WITH

A DEEPLY INGRAINED SET OF CONVICTIONS AND BELIEFS. WHILE, IN GENERAL, THESE DO NOT CONFLICT WITH THE OPINIONS OF RESEARCHERS AND ACADEMIC SPECIALISTS, THEY DO, HOWEVER, REFLECT A CERTAIN PRAGMATISM BORN OF CUMULATIVE BATTLE SCARS.

WE ARE IN A TIME OF INCREASING CONCERN OVER TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS. WHETHER THIS CONCERN MANIFESTS ITSELF IN THE FORM OF STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES, MINIMAL COMPETENCY STANDARDS, OR CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE, THE CENTRAL LOCUS IS THE SAME: WHAT PROVISIONS WILL PRODUCE HIGH-QUALITY PERFORMANCE AMONG CLASSROOM PRACTITIONERS? ALTHOUGH THERE ARE NO GENUINELY CONCLUSIVE ANSWERS, EXPERIMENTAL SOLUTIONS ARE BEING TRIED IN A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT AREAS. MORE ATTENTION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE TEACHING METHODS AND TO FLEXIBLE TIME ALLOTMENTS; AND THE PRINCIPLES OF MASTERY LEARNING ARE BEING ACCORDED AN INCREASING MEASURE OF RESPECT. THERE ARE, OF COURSE OTHER DIMENSIONS OF THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM WORLD THAT MAY ALSO MERIT CONSIDERATION.

SCHOOLING, IT HARDLY NEEDS TO BE NOTED, IS A DISTINCTLY HUMAN ENTERPRISE. PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS CO-MINGLE, INTERACT, REACT, AND IMPACT UPON ONE ANOTHER IN AN ENDLESS INTERPLAY. IT IS IN THESE EXCHANGES, I SUSPECT, THAT FURTHER CLUES MAY BE FOUND FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS.

IT IS PERHAPS SOMEWHAT UNCOMMON TO DISCUSS THE AFFECTIVE COMPONENTS OF INSTRUCTION IN A PERIOD WHEN THERE IS A PRONOUNCED PREOCCUPATION WITH COGNITIVE MATTERS -- BUT NONETHELESS, INCENTIVE, COMMITMENT, DESIRE, AND THE ATTITUDINAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS ARE IMPORTANT. HOW MUCH, AND HOW WELL, A CHILD LEARNS, IN SHORT, IS NOT ENTIRELY DETERMINED BY THE SUBJECT-MATTER, INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD, AND STUDY MATERIALS. LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT ALSO IS INFLUENCED BY THE WAY CHILDREN PERCEIVE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO USE THE FULL RANGE OF THEIR LEARNING CAPABILITIES. ALL OF THESE, IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, ARE AFFECTED BY THE ENVIRONMENT PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS CREATE.

THERE ARE, I THINK, SIX PARTICULAR ELEMENTS IN THIS ENVIRONMENT THAT WARRANT SERIOUS DELIBERATION:

(1) THE TEACHER'S CONCERN FOR SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM STRUCTURE

(2) THE TEACHER'S SENSE OF PURPOSE, ROLE AND COMMITMENT

(3) THE TEACHER'S DEGREE OF CONFIDENCE

(4) THE TEACHER'S RECOGNITION OF, AND SENSITIVITY TO, INSTRUCTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

(5) THE TEACHER'S SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE

(6) THE TEACHER'S INTEREST IN CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM STRUCTURE -- THE QUALITY OF THE LEARNING CLIMATE -- STEMS, BASICALLY, FROM THE TEACHER'S EDUCATIONAL VALUES. WHAT IS MOST CRITICAL, OBVIOUSLY, IS THAT THE PROVISIONS FOR INSTRUCTION ARE CONDUCIVE TO EFFICIENT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. IT DOES NOT REALLY MATTER WHETHER THE ORGANIZATION IS FLEXIBLE OR RIGID, WHETHER THE RULES ARE LOOSE OR TIGHT, OR WHETHER THE TEACHER IS PERMISSIVE OR AUTHORITARIAN: EFFECTIVE LEARNING CAN

OCCUR UNDER ALL OF THESE CONDITIONS. THERE ARE NO IMMUTABLE LAWS TO TEACHING AND LEARNING: SO LONG AS THE TOTAL AMBIANCE OF THE CLASSROOM IS PRODUCTIVE. A SLIGHT LAPSE IN ONE AREA, OR A MILD EXCESS IN ANOTHER, PROPERLY COMPENSATED FOR, DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS LIMITATION.

I HAVE BEEN STRUCK, OVER THE YEARS, BY THE LACK OF DIRECT CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TEACHER KNOWLEDGE, INTELLIGENCE AND CLEVERNESS -- ON THE ONE HAND -- AND TEACHING SUCCESS ON THE OTHER. GREAT TEACHERS, ADMITTEDLY, ARE NEITHER STUPID NOR UNINFORMED. BUT BEING ERUDITE AND HAVING BRAINPOWER DO NOT ALONE PRODUCE EXPERTNESS IN TEACHING. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, IT IS THE PRACTITIONER WHO EXCELS AT FACILITATING THE STUDENT'S LEARNING THAT ACHIEVES THE MOST IMPRESSIVE RESULTS. SUCH FACILITATION IS A BYPRODUCT OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR, THAT IS, THE ADEPTNESS WITH WHICH THE CHILD'S DESIRE TO LEARN IS STIMULATED; AND THE TEACHER'S CAPACITY TO SIMPLIFY THE ACQUISITION OF IDEAS AND SKILLS.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT A HEALTHY SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM IS FREE OF TENSION AND STRESS, NOR THAT LEARNING DOES NOT, UPON OCCASION, REQUIRE HARD WORK, DRUDGERY, AND A TOLERANCE FOR FRUSTRATION. STRONG TEACHERS GENERALLY IMPOSE GREATER DEMANDS UPON THEIR STUDENTS THAN WEAK ONES. DESPITE THESE HIGH EXPECTATIONS, HOWEVER, THE LEARNING TASKS SEEM MANAGEABLE RATHER THAN WORTHLESS. A MASTER TEACHER IS ABLE TO EXTRACT SUSTAINED PUPIL EFFORT, AS WELL AS ENSURE THAT SUCH EFFORT IS MAXIMALLY PRODUCTIVE. THE BEST OF TEACHERS, IN SHORT, KNOW THEMSELVES, THEIR SUBJECTS, THEIR STUDENTS AND THE DEVICES THROUGH WHICH THE LEARNING OBJECTIVES ARE BEST ACCOMPLISHED.

THEY ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT, INSOFAR AS TEACHING IS A HELPING PROFESSION, MERELY SELECTING SENSIBLE CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS IS NOT ENOUGH. CHILDREN MUST FEEL THAT THEIR TEACHERS DO CARE ABOUT AND RESPECT THEM, AND THEY MUST SENSE THE USEFULNESS OF WHAT IS BEING LEARNED. EVERY TEACHER HAS A PERSONAL CONCEPTION OF PURPOSE AND ROLE THAT DEFINES FUNCTIONS. A SECOND MAJOR ELEMENT IN GOOD

TEACHING -- BEYOND STRUCTURE -- IS A SENSE OF COMMITMENT. IF A TEACHER VIEWS TEACHING AS NO MORE THAN A JOB -- AS LABOR TO BE EXCHANGED FOR SALARY -- STUDENTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO LEARN WITH ALACRITY. BY THE SAME TOKEN, WHEN A TEACHER TAKES HIS OR HER PURPOSE TO BE THAT OF TASKMASTER, WHOSE PRINCIPAL OBLIGATION IS TO ENFORCE RULES, QUALITY INSTRUCTION IS LOST. PRACTITIONERS, THEREFORE, MUST NOT ONLY KNOW HOW TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES WITH HIGH EFFICIENCY, BUT THESE OBJECTIVES MUST THEMSELVES HAVE MERIT. EVERY EXPERIENCED PRINCIPAL, AS AN ILLUSTRATION, HAS AT TIMES BEEN DISMAYED BY INSTRUCTORS WHO PURSUE THE WRONG GOALS, OR INADEQUATE GOALS -- WITH VIGOROUS DILIGENCE. AND SIMILARLY, EVERY EXPERIENCED PRINCIPAL HAS BEEN SADDENED, AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, BY THE TEACHER WHO, THOUGH BLESSED WITH GREAT TALENT, FUNCTIONS PERFUNCTORILY.

IN THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, TEACHERS HAVE A PROFOUND BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION. THEY REGARD THEIR EFFORTS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE MATERIALLY TO CHILDREN'S GROWTH, AND TO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BETTER SOCIETY. ABOVE ALL, THEY ARE KEENLY AWARE OF THE ENORMOUS IMPACT A GOOD TEACHER CAN HAVE ON A STUDENT. AS A RESULT, THEY ARE ENERGIZED BY THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WHAT THEY DO. THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF SUCH COMMITMENT IS THAT THEY DERIVE FAR MORE THAN WAGES IN THE WAY OF PERSONAL SATISFACTION FROM THEIR ENDEAVORS.

GOOD TEACHERS ARE INCLINED TO TAKE A BROAD, RATHER THAN NARROW, PERSPECTIVE OF THE TEACHING ACT. THEY KNOW THAT -- MORE OFTEN THAN NOT -- CHILDREN RESPOND TO THE TEACHER RATHER THAN THE SUBJECT. IT IS FOR THIS REASON, I SUSPECT, THAT SOME TEACHERS GET DISCOURAGING RESULTS EVEN WITH APPEALING SUBJECT-MATTER, WHILE OTHERS CAN MAKE EVEN THE DULLEST OF LESSONS SEEM EXCITING. THOSE WHO ARE SENSITIVE TO THE POWER INHERENT IN THE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP, TRY TO GO BEYOND THE SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF A TOPIC AND DEAL WITH THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR PUPILS. ALTHOUGH THEY TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO ENSURE GOOD INTELLECTUAL

ACHIEVEMENT, THEY ARE INTERESTED IN OTHER THINGS AS WELL. THEY WORRY WHEN A CHILD LEARNS GRAMMAR BUT HAS NO FRIENDS; THEY FRET WHEN A CHILD IS UNABLE TO COPE WITH FRUSTRATION.

COMMITMENT -- THE SIMPLE DESIRE TO DO AS WELL AS ONE CAN -- PROMPTS TEACHERS' INTEREST IN OVERCOMING WEAKNESSES, ACQUIRING NEW SKILLS, DEEPENING THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CRAFT, AND MAKING THE LARGEST POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO THEIR STUDENTS. WITHOUT SUCH COMMITMENT NONE OF THESE IS MUCH OF AN INCENTIVE. DESIRE IS A POTENT HUMAN STIMULUS. IT PROBABLY ACCOUNTS FOR MORE ACHIEVEMENT THAN NATIVE CAPACITY. ONE ENCOUNTERS, NOW AND THEN, A GIFTED TEACHER BLESSED WITH EXTRAORDINARY ABILITY. IN THE MAIN, HOWEVER, GOOD TEACHERS ARE GOOD BECAUSE THEY CONTINUALLY STRIVE FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT. AND THAT'S COMMITMENT.

BUT COMMITMENT IS NOT AN IRREVERSIBLE CONDITION; IT CAN BE NURTURED IN ONE KIND OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND DISSIPATED IN ANOTHER. AND THIS IS WHERE MANY OF YOU COME INTO THE PICTURE:

ONE OF THE PRIMARY TESTS OF A SKILLFUL ADMINISTRATOR LIES IN HIS OR HER ABILITY TO BRING FORTH THE BEST IN TEACHERS. LEADERSHIP OF THIS SORT, IS ALSO DEPENDENT UPON -- ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENT. THE PRINCIPAL OR SUPERINTENDENT WHO IS WILLING TO SETTLE FOR THE MEDIOCRE, OR WHO ACTS AGGRESSIVELY ONLY IN TIMES OF CRISIS, IS CERTAIN TO DIMINISH FACULTY MORALE, REDUCE TEACHER MOTIVATION, AND WEAKEN ORGANIZATION RAPPORT. THERE IS, THEN, A STRONG BOND BETWEEN THE FIRST ESSENTIAL ELEMENT -- SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CLIMATE -- AND THE SECOND -- COMMITMENT. IN THE ABSENCE OF HIGH PROFESSIONAL IDEALS AND DEDICATION, CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOLS SIMPLY LACK VITALITY. THEY ARE LIFELESS.

YET, JUST AS KNOWLEDGE IS NOT ENOUGH TO PRODUCE SUPERIOR TEACHING, COMMITMENT -- UNFOCUSED AND UNDISCIPLINED -- IS ALSO INSUFFICIENT. COUNTLESS TEACHERS, DRIVEN BY A KEEN INTEREST IN HELPING CHILDREN, HAVE, DESPITE THEIR GOOD INTENTIONS, BEEN INEFFECTUAL. WHATEVER THEIR METHODS AND INTENT, TEACHERS WILL BE

REGARDED BY THEIR PUPILS AS AUTHORITY FIGURES. IT DOES NOT PARTICULARLY MATTER WHETHER THE TEACHER EMPHASIZED HEURISTICS, ROTE LEARNING, DRILL, OR DIDACTICS. WHAT DOES MATTER IS THAT THE TEACHER HAS A CLEAR SENSE OF MISSION, COUPLED WITH A SURE COMMAND OF PROCEDURES THROUGH WHICH IT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED. THE TEACHER WHO AGONIZES OVER BEING TOO STRICT OR PERMISSIVE; OR WHO HAS AN EXAGGERATED NEED TO BE POPULAR AMONG STUDENTS, OR WHO LACKS THE STABILITY TO EXERT CONTROL, IS DOOMED TO FAILURE. WITHOUT A FEELING OF CONFIDENCE IN THE VALUE OF THE LEARNING GOALS, IN THE EFFICIENCY OF THE TEACHING METHOD BEING USED, AND IN ONE'S PERSONAL ADEQUACY, INSTRUCTION SUFFERS.

WHAT I REFER TO AS CONFIDENCE INVOLVES MANY DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS; EACH NONETHELESS, IS AN INDISPENSABLE FACTOR IN SUCCESSFUL TEACHING. THE FIRST DIMENSION HAS TO DO WITH CONFIDENCE IN SELF. UPON OCCASION, TEACHERS WAVER FROM ONE SET OF ATTITUDES TO ANOTHER, UNCERTAIN AS TO WHAT IS RIGHT OR WRONG.

TO BE UNCERTAIN IS TO BE INEFFECTIVE. HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS INVARIABLY REFLECT THE COURAGE OF THEIR CONVICTIONS. THEY HAVE A FIRM BELIEF IN THE APPROPRIATENESS OF WHAT THEY DO, UNAMBIGUOUS POLICIES ON WHICH TO BASE THEIR DECISIONS, AND COMPLETE ASSURANCE AS TO THEIR OWN COMPETENCE. THEY ARE NEITHER PLAGUED BY SELF-DOUBT NOR THE NAGGING FEAR THAT THEIR PROCEDURES MAY BE WRONG. AS A RESULT, THEY ARE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR GOALS SYSTEMATICALLY, WITHOUT FALTERING, VACILLATING FROM ONE APPROACH TO ANOTHER, OR SUFFERING THE PSYCHIC TRAUMA OF ENDLESS ANXIETY. CONVINCED THAT THEIR TEACHING BEHAVIOR IS PROPER, THEY ARE WHAT ABRAHAM MASLOW DESCRIBED AS SELF-ACTUALIZING.

A SECOND LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE INVOLVES THE TEACHER'S FAITH IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, TEACHING METHOD, AND THE FUNDAMENTAL WORTH OF THE SUBJECT ITSELF. THERE ARE HISTORY TEACHERS WHO, WHEN PUSHED TO CANDOR, THINK A KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY WILL DO THEIR STUDENTS' LITTLE GOOD; SCIENCE TEACHERS WHO SUSPECT THAT WHATEVER

IS TAUGHT WILL BE FORGOTTEN IN A MATTER OF DAYS; AND ENGLISH TEACHERS WHO FEEL THAT THE REQUIRED TEACHING TEXT IS VIRTUALLY USELESS. IN THESE SITUATIONS, THE QUALITY OF THE LEARNING IS LESS THAN DESIRABLE.

THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH SUCH LACK OF CONFIDENCE OCCURS CONSTITUTES A STRONG ARGUMENT FOR SUBSTANTIAL TEACHER AUTONOMY. GIVEN THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE, SOME TEACHERS MAY STILL BE CAUGHT UP IN INDECISION, BUT THERE IS AT LEAST THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY WILL SELECT PROCEDURES WHICH, TO THEM, MAKE SENSE. STANDARDS, OF COURSE, ARE IMPORTANT AND EVERY TEACHER SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING CERTAIN THAT EVERY CHILD LEARNS, BUT THIS NEED NOT MITIGATE AGAINST THE PEDAGOGICAL FREEDOM TO ORGANIZE INSTRUCTION IN WHATEVER WAY SEEMS MOST DESIRABLE. ALLOWANCE FOR INDIVIDUALITY IS VIRTUALLY ESSENTIAL IF THE TEACHER IS TO HAVE MAXIMUM SECURITY. MOREOVER, SINCE CONFIDENCE DEVELOPS CUMULATIVELY, EXPANDING FROM

A CONTINUUM OF PREVIOUS SUCCESSES, REGULATIONS WHICH INTERFERE WITH PERSONAL FLEXIBILITY ARE LIKELY TO CREATE MORE HARM THAN GOOD.

A THIRD LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE STEMS FROM THE MANNER IN WHICH TEACHERS REGARD STUDENTS. AS THE CELEBRATED RESEARCH ON THE SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY HAS DEMONSTRATED, THE INSTRUCTOR WHO VIEWS STUDENTS AS CAPABLE IS LIKELY TO GENERATE MORE LEARNING THAN THE ONE WHO QUESTIONS THEIR ABILITY. OPTIMISM AS TO A CHILD'S CAPACITY TO LEARN IS CONDITIONED, IN LARGE MEASURE, BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE TEACHER UNDERSTANDS THE LEARNER. VAST NUMBERS OF STUDENTS HAVE FAILED TO ACHIEVE SIMPLY BECAUSE THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR LEARNING EITHER MISJUDGED THE OBSTACLES OR ASSUMED THAT THEY COULD NOT BE OVERCOME. BLOOM'S CLASSICAL EXPERIMENTS ON MASTERY LEARNING HAVE CLEARLY SHOWN THAT RELATIVELY SIMPLE READJUSTMENTS IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PATTERN CAN GREATLY INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. THERE ARE TEACHERS IN THE

GHETTO SCHOOLS, LABORING UNDER EXTRAORDINARY HANDICAPS, WHO OFTEN OBTAIN REMARKABLE RESULTS BECAUSE THEY RESPECT THEIR STUDENTS' POTENTIAL, UNDERSTAND THE IMPEDIMENTS THAT EXIST, AND BUILD APPROPRIATE MECHANISMS INTO THEIR TEACHING PROCEDURES. THEY ARE COMPASSIONATE, BUT THEY NEITHER PERMIT SYMPATHY TO REDUCE EXPECTATIONS, NOR CONFUSE TEMPORARY DIFFICULTY WITH INCAPACITY. THEIR CONFIDENCE IS BASED UPON THE FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTION THAT VIRTUALLY EVERY CHILD CAN LEARN -- AND THE FIRM BELIEF THAT PROPER STRATEGIES CAN OVERCOME THE MOST SEVERE HURDLES.

THESE THREE DIMENSIONS OF TEACHER CONFIDENCE -- A SURE COMMITMENT TO SELF AND PURPOSE, A SECURE RELIANCE UPON GOOD PROCEDURES, AND AN UNSHAKEABLE FAITH IN ULTIMATE STUDENT SUCCESS -- CONSTITUTE A POWERFUL FORCE. THEY, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, PREVENT THE HYPOCRISY, LASSITUDE, AND CARELESSNESS THAT SOMETIMES DISSIPATE TEACHING SKILL.

IT IS ONLY AFTER THESE ASPECTS OF CONFIDENCE ARE PRESENT, THAT THE PRACTITIONER IS ABLE TO TAKE COMPLETE ADVANTAGE OF CLASSROOM EVENTS AND EXPLOIT THE FULL RANGE OF TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES. HAVIGHURST AND OTHERS HAVE WRITTEN OF "THE TEACHABLE MOMENT," REFERRING TO THE RANDOM SITUATIONS WHICH ALLOW THE TEACHER TO SEIZE UPON SOME SPECIAL OCCURRENCE. A FOURTH IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN SUCCESSFUL TEACHING, CONSEQUENTLY, LIES IN THE PRACTITIONER'S RECOGNITION OF TEACHING POTENTIAL. WHEREAS SOME INSTRUCTORS ARE OBLIVIOUS TO THE SUBTLE NUANCES OF THE TEACHING-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, UNABLE TO CAPITALIZE UPON A PROPITIOUS SITUATION, OTHERS SEEM INTUITIVELY TO SENSE A SERENDIPITOUS DEVELOPMENT AND ARE ABLE TO USE IT TO ADVANTAGE.

THIS IS ONLY POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, WHEN THE TEACHER HAS A COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TEACHING MATERIAL, THE METHOD AND THE LEARNER. IF THE GRASP OF THE SUBJECT-MATTER IS ONLY MARGINAL, IF THE PRACTITIONER KNOWS BUT ONE WAY TO PURSUE THE

OBJECTIVE, OR IF THE TEACHER HAS ONLY A LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF THE STUDENTS' VALUES AND CONCERNS -- THE GOLDEN "TEACHABLE MOMENTS" ARE LOST.

THE VARIATION IN INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTION OF TEACHING OPPORTUNITY IS TRULY REMARKABLE. AS A PRINCIPAL, I WAS CONTINUALLY ASTONISHED, AS MANY OF YOU HAVE BEEN, AT THE WAY IN WHICH INSECURE TEACHERS WERE BOUND TO A FIXED SYSTEM, UNABLE TO COPE WITH ANYTHING THAT BROKE THEIR CUSTOMARY ROUTINE. A RAINY DAY, A FIRE DRILL, AN UNEXPECTED DELAY IN THE DELIVERY OF SUPPLIES, AND SIMILAR INTERRUPTIONS WERE REGARDED AS CATASTROPHIC. THE MATURE, SEASONED PRACTITIONER, HOWEVER, WAS ALERT TO UNANTICIPATED CHANGE, AND GUIDED BY HUNCH -- AND ABLE TO CONVERT THESE SITUATIONS INTO A CONSTRUCTIVE LESSON.

WE DO FAR TOO LITTLE, IN OUR TEACHER TRAINING, TO ENLARGE THE PRACTITIONER'S VISION OF WHAT CAN BE DONE. ASIDE FROM THE FACT THAT TEACHERS TEND TO EXCHANGE PROFESSIONAL TECHNIQUES SOMEWHAT

LESS FREQUENTLY THAN OTHER CRAFTS, THE EXPANSION OF AWARENESS AS TO TEACHING POSSIBILITIES COMES ONLY THROUGH DIRECT EXPERIENCE. A TALENTED NEOPHYTE, FOR EXAMPLE, HOWSOEVER WELL-INTENTIONED, IS NOT LIKELY TO RECOGNIZE AN UNSUSPECTED OPPORTUNITY UNLESS, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, IT IS DEMONSTRATED IN A REALISTIC CONTEXT. FOR THIS REASON, I CANNOT HELP BUT BELIEVE THAT A GREAT DEAL WOULD BE GAINED IF TEACHERS WERE GIVEN MORE TIME (~~YOU ADMINISTRATORS TAKE NOTE OF THIS!~~) FOR MUTUAL OBSERVATION AND COLLABORATION. THE YOUNG TEACHER, IN OBSERVING AN EXPERIENCED MASTER IN ACTION, IS CERTAIN TO HAVE A VALUABLE EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE.

TEACHING IS NO DIFFERENT FROM OTHER HUMAN ENDEAVORS, WHERE THE SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE BECOMES COMMONPLACE, ONCE SOME EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMER POINTS THE WAY. ATHLETIC RECORDS, SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGHS, NEW MOVEMENTS IN ART, MUSIC AND LITERATURE -- ALL EMANATE FROM NEW PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT CAN BE DONE. IT MIGHT NOT BE A BAD IDEA TO FORMALIZE SOME SORT OF

"BUDDY-SYSTEM" THROUGH WHICH BEGINNING TEACHERS ARE PERMITTED TO OBSERVE SKILLFUL TEACHERS AT WORK. IF NOTHING ELSE, SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD STIMULATE, AMONG APPRENTICES, GREATER SENSITIVITY TO THE VIRTUALLY LIMITLESS DEVICES THROUGH WHICH LEARNING CAN BE ENCOURAGED. MY OWN EXPERIENCES LEAD ME TO BELIEVE THAT IN THE WAKE OF NEW KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION THE BUDDY SYSTEM IS EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT FOR EXPERIENCED TEACHERS. THERE IS MUCH TO BE LEARNED IN OBSERVING OTHER EXPERIENCED TEACHERS, AS WELL AS THOSE TALENTED NEOPHYTES ARMED WITH NEW KNOWLEDGE AND ADVANCED TEACHING STRATEGIES.

FEW CLICHES ARE MORE OVERWORKED THAN THE ANCIENT ADAGE ABOUT "SUCCESS BREEDING SUCCESS." YET, THIS TIRED APHORISM IS NOWHERE MORE APPLICABLE THAN IN TEACHING AND LEARNING. STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR ALIKE, LOOK TO A NEW LESSON WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE. ALL GOOD TEACHERS -- AND THEIR STUDENTS -- SEEM TO DERIVE IMMENSE SATISFACTION FROM THEIR LABORS. THE

DESIRE AND ENTHUSIASM REFERRED TO EARLIER, TRIGGERED, IN CONSIDERABLE DEGREE, BY A STEADY AND APPARENT STREAM OF ACCOMPLISHMENT, IS CONTAGIOUS. YET ANOTHER ELEMENT IN SUCCESSFUL TEACHING PRACTICE, IS TO BE FOUND IN THE GRADUAL ACCUMULATION OF REWARDING EXPERIENCE. NO MATTER HOW GREAT THE TEACHER'S LATENT TALENT (OR LEARNER'S APTITUDE), EARLY FAILURE TENDS TO BREED MORE FAILURE. CONVERSELY, WHEN STEPS ARE TAKEN TO ENSURE EARLY SUCCESS, THE PROBABILITES OF CONTINUED HIGH ACHIEVEMENT ARE GOOD.

IT IS IN THIS REGARD THAT A SKILLFUL PRINCIPAL, WHO TAKES FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SERIOUSLY, CAN BE OF PROFOUND HELP. THE ASSIGNMENT OF A NEW TEACHERS TO THE MOST DIFFICULT CLASSES, (AS A GESTURE TOWARD THE PRIVILIGES OF SENIORITY) FOR INSTANCE, IS FOLLY. AN ADEPT PRINCIPAL WOULD NOT ONLY SEEK A COMPARATIVELY EASY ENTRY POINT FOR A NEW TEACHER, BUT WOULD ALSO STRIVE TO PROVIDE CONTINUOUS ASSISTANCE. THE BEGINNER CAN BE ENCOURAGED TO SOLICIT ADVICE FROM AN EXPERIENCED COLLEAGUE: COUNSELORS AND

OTHER SPECIALISTS CAN BE USED TO FAMILIARIZE THE TEACHER WITH THE STUDENTS' LIFE STYLES AND HOME ENVIRONMENTS; TROUBLE-SHOOTING CLINICS CAN BE ORGANIZED; AND, TO REPEAT A PREVIOUS POINT, YOUNG TEACHERS CAN BE PAIRED -- IN A KIND OF PROFESSIONAL ALLIANCE -- WITH OLDER ONES OF SIMILAR DISPOSITION AND TEACHING PHILOSOPHY. BUT BEWARE. DON'T USE OLD TIMERS WITH CYNICAL AND OBSOLETE SURVIVAL SKILLS.

MANY OF YOU MAY WONDER WHY I HAVE PLACED EMPHASIS ON NEW TEACHER TRAINING IN A PERIOD WHEN THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW TEACHERS. NEW DATA FROM ACROSS THIS NATION ARE BEGINNING TO SHOW SEVERE SHORTAGES EXISTING IN MATH, SCIENCE, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION. EVEN ENGLISH TEACHERS ARE BEING RECRUITED IN SOME PLACES. AND BEFORE LONG WE EXPECT THAT THE SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS WILL BE MAGNIFIED AS BIRTHS FROM THE BABY BOOM GENERATION PEAKS. THERE MAY BE NO BETTER TIME THAN RIGHT NOW TO DEVELOP THE INTEGRATION OF PRE- AND INSERVICE EDUCATION.

THE SIXTH ELEMENT THEREFORE FOLLOWS LOGICALLY: SUPERIOR TEACHING IS THE NATURAL RESULT OF AUTONOMOUS AND SUSTAINED PROFESSIONAL GROWTH. A GREAT DEAL HAS BEEN SAID, AND WRITTEN, ABOUT STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND INSERVICE EDUCATION. VARIOUS THEORIES HAVE BEEN ESPOUSED; DIVERSE PROGRAMS OF ORIENTATION HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED; AND A GOOD MANY DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN TRIED. THE BEST OF THESE ARE UNQUESTIONABLY VALUABLE. AND THERE COULD BE LATENT VIRTUES TO THOSE WHICH HAVE NOT YET DELIVERED A HIGH YIELD. TO ARGUE, HOWEVER, THAT ONE PROVISION IS CLEARLY SUPERIOR TO EVERY OTHER, IS TO DISTORT REALITY. IT SIMPLY EXHORTS US TO CONTINUE TO EXPLORE THE BEST AND MOST USEFUL WAYS TO DELIVER BOTH TRAINING AND RETRAINING.

IF WE KNOW WHAT A TEACHER NEEDS <u>TODAY</u> AND ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE FOR THE PERPETUAL DEVELOPMENT OF MASTERY OVER TIME, THEN WE WILL BE READY TO DEAL WITH THE LARGER QUESTION OF -- "WHAT

WILL IT MEAN TO BE AN EDUCATED PERSON IN TOMORROW'S WORLD?" HOW DO WE MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM LOOKING AT OUR TOES TO LOOKING AT THE DISTANT HORIZON?

THE BEACONS ON THE HORIZON THAT I SEE ARE, WITH SLIGHT MODIFICATION AND ADDITIONS, THE EMERGING REALITIES OF INTERDEPENDENCE, COLLABORATION, SHARING, LONG-TERM RESPONSIBILITY, SMALLNESS (YES, SMALLNESS -- ONE ON ONE) WHOLENESS, SYSTEM THINKING, EVOLVING CONSCIOUSNESS, TEMPORARINESS, ACCEPTANCE OF DIFFERENCES AND ADAPTATION.

AS CHAMPIONS OF LEARNING, IT IS OUR CHALLENGE TO DESIGN ALL TRAINING AND RETRAINING FOR EDUCATION PERSONNEL AROUND AN AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING THAT THESE REALITIES ARE TO BE ACCEPTED, PRACTICED, AND VIGOROUSLY FOSTERED. IF WE ARE TO BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THE FUTURE, WE MUST ASK OURSELVES THE ONTOLOGICAL QUESTION: WHO AM I? THEN FOLLOW WITH WHAT ARE MY BELIEFS? WHERE DO I WANT TO GO? IF WE CAN GIVE ANSWER TO THESE

QUESTIONS, THEN, AND ONLY THEN, CAN WE LAY CLAIM TO EVEN A TENUOUS CONTROL OF THE DIRECTION OF OUR OWN DESTINY.

WE IN THE PROFESSION HAVE FOR SO LONG LOOKED TO OTHERS TO PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP OF THIS SOCIETY. OURS WAS A CONTENTMENT WITH TRADITION TO SIMPLY MIRROR SOCIETY. CONDITIONS ARE CHANGING SO RAPIDLY THAT THIS NO LONGER IS ACCEPTABLE. BUT WITH THIS CHANGE IN ATTITUDES COMES PROBLEMS -- FOR THOSE OF US WHO CHOSE TO LEAD -- OF A MAGNITUDE UNIMAGINED IN THE PAST. IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO FACE -- BUT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE. IF WE DO EXPECT TO LEAD, THEN WE DO HAVE TO ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DEALING WITH WHO WE ARE. PERHAPS THE POEM "INVICTUS", BY WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY, MAY BEST DESCRIBE THAT WHICH WE MUST FACE IN ANSWERING THAT BASIC QUESTION.

OUT OF THE NIGHT THAT COVERS ME
BLACK AS THE PIT FROM POLE TO POLE
I THANK WHATEVER GODS MAY BE
FOR MY UNCONQUERABLE SOUL

IN THE FELL CLUTCH OF CIRCUMSTANCE

I HAVE NOT WINCED NOR CRIED ALOUD

UNDER THE BLUDGEONINGS OF CHANCE

MY HEAD IS BLOODY BUT UNBOWED

BEYOND THIS PLACE OF WRATH AND TEARS

LOOMS BUT THE HORROR OF THE SHADE

AND YET THE MENACE OF THE YEARS

FINDS, AND SHALL FIND, ME UNAFRAID

IT MATTERS NOT HOW STRAIT THE GATE

HOW CHARGED WITH PUNISHMENTS THE SCROLL

I AM THE MASTER OF MY FATE

I AM THE CAPTAIN OF MY SOUL

# # #